

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01

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FM AMEMBASSY SUVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7594

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SUVA 1161

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PGOV, NH, XP

SUBJECT: NEW HEBRIDES SITUATION

1. AS HE HAS DONE ON PREVIOUS VISITS TO SUVA, GEORGE KALKOA, VICE PRESIDENT OF VANUAAKU PARTY, NEW HEBRIDES, VISIED THE EMBASSY AND CALLED ON THE AMBASSADOR TO BRIEF HIM ON THE SITUATION IN PORT VILA.

2. HE BEGAN BY SAYING THAT HIS VIIT THIS TIME WAS ALSO FOR THE PURPOSE OF GETTING VISAS FOR REVEREND WALTER H. LINI, PRESIDENT AND B. ESOPPE, SECRETARY GENERAL OF VANUAAKU TO VISIT NEW YORK EARLY IN AUGUST FOR THE PURPOSE OF CONTACTING THE UN COMMITTEE OF 24. TO BRIEF MEMBERS OF IT ON THE EVOLUTION OF THE NEW HEBRIDES SITUATION.

3. AFTER GOING THROUGH THE STORY OF THE UNSUCCESSFUL NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN VANUAAKU AND UK AND FRANCE ON THE PARTY'S
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CONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE 29 NOVEMBER ELECTIONS AND SUBSEQUENT BOYCOTT OF THE ELECTIONS (ALL OOF WHICH IS ALREADY KNOWN TO THE DEPARTMENT), KALKOA REPORTED THAT THE PARTY'S NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT ARE PROCEEDING FAIRLY WELL. NEXT TEST WILL COME ON 18 JULY WHEN THE ASSEMBLY, WHICH WAS ELECTED ON 29 NOVEMBER AND WHICH KALKOA REPEATEDLY CALLED "ILLEGITIMATE", WILL CONSIDER THE 33 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE

SPECIAL COMMITTEE THAT REVIEWED THE ELCTRAL LAW. THE GOVERNMENT IS AWARE OF THE SELFISH INTEREST OF THE ASSEMBLY MEMBERS TO REJECT THE RECOMMENDATIONS SO AS TO PROLONG THE LIFE OF THE ASSEMBLY AND IS PAREPARED TO TAKE STEPS TO ASSURE THAT THE ASSEMBLY WILL GIVE FAVORABLE CONSIDERATION TO THE PROPOSED CHANGES IN THE ELECTORAL LAW.

4. HE CONFIRMED THAT THE PEOPLE'S PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT (PPG) WHICH THE VANUAAKU PARTY HAD SET UP HAS CEASED TO EXIST WHICH MEANS AMONG OTHER THINGS IT HAS CEASED TO COLLECT TAXES AND FINES. INTERESTINGLY HE REVEALED THAT ALL TAXES AND FINES COLLECTED BY THE PPG IN THE LAST FEW MONTHS HAD BEEN DEPOSITED IN ESCROW IN THE BANK TOGETHER WITH RECEIPTS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS.

5. IN ACCORDANCE WITH AGREEMENT REACHED WITH THE GOVERNMENT REGISTRATION OF 18, 19 AND 20 YEAR OLDS IS ABOUT TO BEGIN THIS MONTH AND THUS ONE MORE OF VANUAAKU'S CONDITIONS FOR PARTICPATING IN NEXT ELECTIONS IS BEING MET.

6. ANOTHER CONDITION WHICH HE HOPED WOULD BE MET IMMEDIATELY AFTER COMPLETION OF THE REGISTRATION ABOVE IS ISSUANCE OF ID CARDS TO GUARANTEE AGAINST FRAUD IN ELECTIONS. WHEN THE AMBASSADOR SUGGESTED THAT THE SYSTEM ALREADY IN PRACTICE IN FIJI OF MARKING THE ELECTORS FINGER WITH INK WAS A SIMPLE, MORE ECONOMICAL AND UNDOUBTEDLY MORE EFFECTIVE SYSTEM TO GUARANTEE

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INTEGRITY OF ELECTIONS, KALKOA RESPONDED WITH GREAT ALACRITY. HE HASTENED TO MAKE A NOTE OF THE IDEA WHILE MUMBLING SOMETHING TO THE EFFECT "WHY NO ONE HAD THOUGHT OF IT BEFORE."

7. HE CONFIRMED THAT CHIEF MINISTER HAS OFFERED VANUAAKA THREE SEATS ON THE GOVERNMENT, NAMELY THE MINISTRIES OF HEALTH, PUBLIC WORKS AND TOURISM AND THAT VANUAAKU IS INCLINDED TO ACCEPT NOW THAT REGISTRATION OF YOUNG VOTERS IS ASSURED AND QUESTION OF ID CARDS LIKELY TO BE RESOLVED ONE WAY OR ANOTHER. HE ADDED HOWEVER THAT VANUAAKU WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE WHICH ALSO PROVIDES THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER.

8. HE REPORTED THAT HE HAD BRIEFED THE DAY BEFORE JIOJI KOTOBALAVU, SECRETDLLMP FOREIGN AFFAIRS, WHO URGED HIM ONCE AGAIN TO SEEK AN ACCOMMODATION WITH THE GOVERNMENT IN THE INTEREST OF NATIONAL UNITY AND SMOOTH TRANSITION TO INDEPENDENCE. THE AMBASSADOR ENDORSED JIONI'S ADVICE AND ADDED HIS OWN URGING FOR RECONDILIATION AND ENTRY INTO THE GOVERNMENT WHICH AFTTER ALL IS COMPOSED OF PAST MEMBERS OF THE VANUAAKU PARTY AND THEREFORE OF PEOPLE WELLKNOWN TO THE PRESENT VANUAAKU LEADERS.

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